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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

SP-06-12

DATE: March 9, 2006

SUBJECT: Expansion of *Eat Smart. Play Hard. with ProRodeo* to the National School Lunch Program

TO: School Food Authority Administrators and Food Service Managers

FROM: Christine Emerson, Director
School Nutrition Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is expanding a successful partnership to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The partnership between Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association (PRCA) began in 2003, to increase awareness of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and encourage children to participate in the SFSP. Through the combined efforts of FNS and PRCA, SFSP sites at schools, churches and parks across our region had successful visits by cowboys and rodeo queens. The PRCA members have been positive role models for the children, demonstrating their rodeo skill when possible, interacting with the children, signing autographs and joining them for lunch, while reinforcing the message *Eat Smart. Play Hard.*

In 2005, the partnership again evolved to get the message of *Eat Smart. Play Hard.* and the importance of a healthy lifestyle to children, with the coordination of PRCA visits to schools that participated in SFSP during the summer break. These visits occurred in May, and the cowboys encouraged the children to maintain a healthy lifestyle by participating in the SFSP when school was out. One school was visited by the reigning World Champion bare back rider and another by the World Champion bull rider; each school held an assembly to showcase the visit and one had local media coverage.

Due to the overwhelming success of those PRCA visits, expanding the partnership to the NSLP is a natural fit and will allow us to reach more children with the message *Eat Smart. Play Hard.* A visit could also be coordinated to support a wellness program. Please go to the School Nutrition Programs Web site at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfood/index.html> and look under "Current News and Important Info" to download the brochure *Eat Smart. Play Hard. with ProRodeo*. The brochure provides information about the partnership, what hosting a visit entails, and how to request a visit. You are encouraged to support the expansion of this partnership by contacting Tandy Jones or Ramona Favors of the FNS Mountain Plains Regional Office at (303) 844-0354 to request a PRCA visit to your school.

If you have questions, please contact School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501.

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